1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
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144 is profitable to speak of straight lines in a country
177 where no communication is straight—Mexico City is no more than fifty miles from Tepoztlán. Yet, in spite of this, and in spite of the testimony of Bernal Díaz, the Tepoztecans today appear to be Indians of almost pure blood. Out of four thousand native inhabitants not more than a score or two show plainly their white
177 blood. The Nahuatl language persists, and is spoken
191 by nearly all the inhabitants.[1] A number of young people speak it only as a second language of much less familiarity. On the other hand, nearly everyone speaks Spanish; there are a few old people who do not, and many to whom Spanish is the less familiar tongue. The essential bilinguality of the population reflects the even balance of the culture between Indian and European elements; the culture is neither aboriginal nor Spanish, but a close integration of both—it is
177 Mexican. The inhabitant of Mexico, generally speaking, is the product of these two heritages. But in Tepoztlán, a *pueblo* which was long established before the Conquest on the site which it still occupies and which began immediately after the Conquest to receive elements of European culture, the community itself is the product of that fusion.

[113] [1] The Nahuatl spoken in Tepoztlán, and especially differences in phonetic pattern between Tepoztecan Nahuatl and "classical" Nahuatl, are treated by González Casanova in *Un cuento Mexicano*.

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CHAPTER X

LITERACY AND LITERATURE

212 The latest Mexican census, that of 1921, enumer-
[162] ated 782 adult males living in the *municipio* of Tepoz-
tlán;[1] of these, it was reported, 438 could read and
write. Even when allowance is made for the readiness
of the census-taker to report an individual as literate
on the slightest evidence, it remains probable that
about half of the adults of Tepoztlán can to some de-
[191] gree read and write Spanish. Spanish is the only lan-
[871] guage of the schools; therefore the proportion that can
write Nahuatl is certainly much smaller.

[12] Nevertheless, judged by the standard of the modern
city, these people are illiterate. And because they are
so judged, and because they tend so to judge them-
selves, they are an illiterate folk, not a preliterate
primitive people. Their pre-Columbian ancestors were
a preliterate people, for the writing of the Aztecs was
no doubt an esoteric art, confined to the priestly class.
871 The first secular school was established in Tepoztlán
in the middle of the nineteenth century, but at various
periods during the three centuries that preceded that
872 time there were schools of the church. Today two
schools are maintained in Tepoztlán, one by the state
of Morelos and the other by the federal government.

[1] A total of 3,836 individuals.

l:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
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a native intelligentsia, in the local press, in political ambition, and especially in the linguistic revival, repeats a process that has occurred in many another place where the folk have felt the impact of the city. The pride in the native tongue to a certain extent is shared even by the *tontos*. Among the *correctos* it is more definitely expressed in attempts to keep alive and indeed to "purify" (i.e., to eliminate Spanish loanwords and forms) the beloved tongue. Several attempts have been made in Tepoztlán to organize schools, or discussion groups, for the study and development of Nahuatl. An early leader in this movement is Mariano J. Rojas, native Tepoztecan, now professor of Nahuatl in Mexico City.[1] But several other *correctos* who remain in Tepoztlán assiduously cultivate the language and have attempted to maintain a sort of academy of native speech. The romantic idealization of the language and how it symbolizes local patriotism appear from the following paragraph, published in *El Tepozteco:*

> The sweet and sonorous idiom of our aborigines, of Nezahualcoyotl and Ixtlilxochitl, the idiom of our fathers, which was left us as a sacred heritage, shall not die in spite of those who, although physically they reveal an origin entirely Indian, are ashamed of their race; our language shall live, because there are great and patriotic citizens who do not look down upon their race, who glory in being Indian, who love the members of their race, who greatly esteem their native tongue, and who work, toil and exert themselves for its reconstruction and perfection so that it shall never die.

[1] Author of *Manual de la lengua Nahuatl.*

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This use of the language as a symbol of the Indian heritage has helped to give the movement a racial rather than a nationalistic character.

After the revolution of 1910–23 few of *los correctos* returned to Tepoztlán. Most of those who did go back went back to employ the practical and commercial experience they had acquired in the city in order to earn a living in Tepoztlán. They are the artisans and merchants there today. Of the six men who were most instrumental in organizing the colony of Tepoztecan *émigrés*—the group of intelligentsia—only one returned. Except two teachers, he was the only real intellectual living in Tepoztlán at the time of these observations. The substance of his life-history gives in a specific case the experience passed through by that type of individual who springs from the folk, is no longer entirely at home in it and yet can never quite leave it, and who suffers the conflict and disorganization of his position, with one foot in one world and the other foot in another.[1]

R. G. was born in Tepoztlán about forty-six years ago. He is apparently a pure-blooded Indian. His father was poor, but, like the other Tepoztecans, had his *milpa*. He was a man of some education, and, after the federal government had taken charge of the pre-Columbian ruins above the town, he was made "keeper of the monuments" at three *pesos* a day. The son, R., lived in Tepoztlán until he was nineteen years old. Up to that time his only schooling was that of the little local public school. In his own words, he "lived like an animal," running about and having a good time with the other boys but with no ideas or aims direct-

[1] Dr. Robert E. Park has called this type the "marginal man" (art., "Migration and the Marginal Man").

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

of widespread contacts of the Indian peoples among themselves before the Spanish Conquest, and the common influence of Spanish colonial institutions since the Conquest.

Tepoztlán parallels, to a remarkable degree, many of the characteristics of Mexico as a whole. Within the relatively limited area of the municipio of Tepoztlán [24] we find practically the entire range of climatic zones of Mexico, from the *tierra fría* to *tierra caliente*, with their accompanying variety of natural resources. It is a striking fact that over fifty per cent of the total land area of Mexico falls within the range of altitudes found within this single municipio, that is, from approximately 3,500 to 9,500 feet. Tepoztlán is also distinctive in the way in which its statistical indices follow national figures for such items as the percentage of its arable land to total land, the percentage of its forest land to total land, and the average size of land-holdings. The rate of population growth as well as the distribution of age groups also closely parallels the national figures.

In Tepoztlán, as in Mexico as a whole, we find contrasting elements of the primitive and the modern, the old and the new, the Spanish colonial and the contemporary. Tepoztlán has a strong Indian heritage; many pre-Columbian traits persist in the village today. The system of communal land-ownership, an important aspect of the economy and social organization of the municipio, has remained practically intact. Many elements of pre-Hispanic agriculture are found; corn, beans, and squash remain the staple products. Pre-Columbian traits of material culture have also persisted, particularly in house construction, furnishings, cookery, foods, and clothing. Among the more important of these items we find adobe walls, the sweat-house (*temascal*) made of stone and mortar, clay plastered granaries for corn (*cuescomatl*), the hearth (*tlequilitl*), the three-legged grinding stone (*metate*), the clay griddle (*comal*), the mortar and pestle (*molcaxitl* and *texolotl*), huaraches, tortillas, chile, and pulque. In non-material culture there are also survivals, especially in curing and magic, and in customs pertaining to birth and other stages of the life cycle.[25] The Náhuatl language has also persisted. As late as 1927 Náhuatl was spoken by nearly all the inhabitants, although most of the villagers also spoke Spanish.

The large number of Spanish colonial elements which still exist in the village culture today were introduced early in the sixteenth century soon after the Spanish Conquest. The most important of these traits are the physical layout of the village with its barrios, streets, and central plaza; Catholicism and the churches; the Spanish language; a money economy; domestic animals, the plow and other agricultural tools; and the greater part of the beliefs and customs of the people.

Side by side with the pre-Columbian and Spanish colonial elements are many significant items of modern industrial civilization, such as corn mills and sewing

[24] While the village of Tepoztlán is the primary subject of this study, the village cannot be understood except within the framework of the municipio of Tepoztlán, of which it is the *cabecera* (head), a status roughly equivalent to our county seat. In this study, therefore, there will be frequent references both to the village and the municipio.

[25] Many of Bernardino de Sahagún's descriptions of native Aztec diseases and their cures are still remarkably accurate descriptions of present-day customs in Tepoztlán. Indeed, many sections of Sahagún read as if he had been relying upon Tepoztecan informants.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

in accord with government regulations, must spend a six-month training period in the field to qualify for the medical degree. In addition, some Tepoztecans visit private doctors and the free health clinic in Cuernavaca. The presence of five midwives with some training in modern hygienic methods is also to be noted. Finally, the trend toward a lower general mortality rate may be related to the steadily increasing standard of living in the village. As will be seen later, the consumption of meat, eggs, milk, and bread has risen considerably over the last twenty years.

In Table 8 is presented the average mortality rate by age groups for the entire municipio of Tepoztlán over a twelve-year period from 1930 to 1941, inclusive.

TABLE 8. Average Mortality Rate by Age Group, from 1930 to 1941, Inclusive.

Age Group	Mortality Rate
Less than 1 year	96.94
1-4	44.24
5-9	7.24
10-14	10.31
15-19	11.22
20-39	5.60
40-59	15.75
60 and over	56.80

These figures show that the age of lowest mortality rate in Tepoztlán is from twenty to thirty-nine. The death rate from forty to fifty-nine, though increased, is not unusually high, indicating that many individuals live to a fairly ripe old age.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Two languages are spoken in Tepoztlán, Spanish and the indigenous Náhuatl. Twenty years ago when Redfield was there, nearly all the inhabitants spoke Náhuatl. Since that time there has been a marked decrease in the use of Náhuatl and a corresponding increase in the use of Spanish. The data in Table 9, based on the Federal Census of 1930 and 1940, indicate this trend.

TABLE 9. Languages Spoken in the Municipio and Tepoztlán

Languages	Municipio		Tepoztlán
	1930	1940	1940
Spanish	14%	40%	52%
Náhuatl	4	5	1
Spanish and Náhuatl	82	55	47

Although about one-half of all Tepoztecans are still bilingual, the drop from 82 to 55 per cent for the municipio and to 47 per cent for Tepoztlán proper is striking. The decrease of those who speak only Náhuatl in the entire municipio was from 144 individuals in 1930 to 29 in 1940. In 1944 there were five persons in Tepoztlán who spoke only Náhuatl. The significance of this trend is unmistakable. It would be safe to predict that within the next few generations the number of bilingual persons will become negligible.

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191 Among the younger generation today we noted a distinctly negative attitude toward Náhuatl. People under thirty-five tend to be ashamed to speak Náhuatl in the presence of outsiders and will frequently deny knowledge of the language, although the majority are able to understand it and speak it to some degree. Within most homes, parents and members of the older generation customarily speak in Spanish but resort to Náhuatl to tell secrets, jokes, and especially during quarrels when they wish to be more expressive. Thus, many children have come to associate speaking Náhuatl at home with quarreling, insulting, and scolding. Náhuatl is also preferred at the barrio meetings for the election of the *mayordomo* and during the ceremonial address on the festive celebration in honor of El Tepozteco. It is also spoken by the *huehuechiques* (ceremonial figures) at other fiestas.

191 185 The rapid decrease in the use of Náhuatl has occurred in the face of the persistent efforts of some Tepoztecans to preserve the native language. One of the primary objectives of the Colonia Tepozteco, founded in 1920 in Mexico City by Tepoztecans who had been forced to seek refuge there during the years of the Revolution, was "to bring about the preservation of our native tongue for transmission to future generations." Even before the Revolution a group of Tepoztecan intellectuals had published a paper in Náhuatl. There still exists a pro-Náhuatl society in Mexico City composed primarily of middle-class Tepoztecans who periodically visit the village and proclaim the importance of using the native tongue. When the bus companies were founded in Tepoztlán in the middle thirties, they were given Náhuatl names, one bus cooperative being called Ometochtli and the other El Tepozteco. Similarly, in sports events like track the runners will sometimes take Náhuatl names.

212 The greater use of Spanish in the village has not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in literacy. The decline in illiteracy in the municipio during the ten-year period from 1930 to 1940 has been from 66 to 55 per cent. We have no data for illiteracy for the village of Tepoztlán for 1930. However, in 1940 it was down to 42 per cent, which is considerably lower than for the municipio as a whole. By and large there is a high correlation between membership in the middle economic group and literacy. Many in the upper economic group are illiterate.[39]

204 208 212 There has been a considerable increase in the reading of newspapers in recent years. In Redfield's time no newspapers came regularly to the village, and only a few individuals occasionally read newspapers. In 1944 there were fifty-six people who bought newspapers on an average of twice a week. Forty read *El Universal*, *Novedades*, and *Excelsior*, the conservative Mexican papers; one read *El Popular*, the left wing labor paper; and fifteen read the pro-Sinarquista sheets, *El Sinarquista*, *Hombre Libre*, *Omega*, and *La Pluma*, a local weekly published in Cuernavaca. These individuals played an important role in determining public opinion in the village on local, national, and international issues. It was my impression in 1944 that most of the more vocal villagers were sympathetic to the Axis powers.

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[39] See Chapter 9, "Wealth Differences and Levels of Living," p. 173.

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Of the *curanderos*, four are new and have learned their specialty within the last ten years. Of the two *chirimiteros* referred to by Redfield, one died a short time ago and the other still practices; four have learned their skill within the last six years. The two *huehuechiques* are the same ones of twenty years ago; there have been no new recruits. Of the two fireworks makers of twenty years ago, one has died; the other five are all new in the trade. The three mask makers of Redfield's time are still working, but in addition two sons and a cousin have learned the trade.

At this point we may ask what the prospects are for the survival of these folk specialists in the face of the changes which are taking place in the village. The prospects for the survival of the occupations of mask makers and fireworks makers are very good. The former is dependent primarily upon the Carnaval and the latter upon the barrio fiestas, neither of which shows the slightest signs of dying out. On the contrary, the former has grown in importance and has become an occasion of great spending, while the latter continues unabated and has the active support of the young men, many of whom are comparatively sophisticated.

The prospects for the survival of the *chirimiteros* are not quite as good because their function is gradually being taken over by the modern secular musicians. This tendency can be seen in the center barrios, where, as in Redfield's time, culture changes appeared first in the village. In the last barrio fiesta of San Miguel, in place of the primitive *chirimía*, a fifteen-piece band played from the chapel roof throughout the night. The profession that seems certain to become extinct is that of the *huehuechique*, for this occupation depends on the knowledge and use of Náhuatl, which is rapidly disappearing in the village.[8] An important change in connection with the occupations of *chirimitero* and *huehuechique* is that these specialists are now paid in money; formerly they were compensated with food and drink, another indication of the increasing importance of money.

Prediction in the case of the *curanderos* is more difficult. Most Tepoztecans are not ready to give up their *curanderos*. But they have reached the stage where they are willing to consider the doctor as an alternative, especially in the case of serious illness. Many Tepoztecans now visit private doctors and the Public Health Clinic in Cuernavaca. Certainly the hold of the *curanderos* has become much weaker; they are no longer as busy as formerly, and their income on the whole is very small. There are only two *curanderos* in the village who have great prestige and good income.

This raises the question of the relative desirability of the survival of old institutions in the face of general trends toward modernization. While this problem will be discussed later, it can be pointed out here that a sharp distinction must be made between the social effects of such old institutions as the Carnaval and barrio fiestas on the one hand and the *curandero* on the other. The fiestas, especially the Carnaval, provide much needed diversion for all age groups and tend to unify the village.

[8] During the time that this was being written, one of the two *huehuechiques* died, and no new recruit has appeared to take his place.

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cause these innovations occurred within such a short period, their effects were mutually reenforcing and the tempo of change was accelerated. The road broke down the barriers of isolation and gave Tepoztlán easy access to new markets; the granting of *ejidos* supplied a somewhat broader land base, thereby increasing production; the corn mills improved the lot of the women and gave them free time which they could devote to commerce and other gainful occupations. The villagers obtained a new source of income from the sale of their *ciruelas* and other fruits which gained commercial value after the means of communication were improved. The road was also responsible for the tourist trade, more frequent social contacts with Cuernavaca, and indirectly the changes in clothing styles. The bus lines have affected village life in more ways than simply that of improving means of communication. They have become a new economic and political force in the village and a new source of conflict. Each line has built up a following of members who have a direct economic interest in their cooperative. The relatives and *compadres* of these members are also involved in the conflict, and the village is again divided into factions. Furthermore, the directors of the cooperatives are beginning to take political control out of the hands of the peasants. The employees of the bus cooperatives now constitute the first important group of non-farmers in Tepoztlán.

The school has been an extremely important agent of cultural change in the village in the past twenty years. As we have seen, enrollment soared from less than 100 in 1926 to over 700 in 1948. The school has increased literacy; has taught the children new standards of personal hygiene and cleanliness; has familiarized them with toilets, running water, and showers; has introduced new games and a spirit of group play lacking before. The school has become the symbol of the new in Tepoztlán; it has made for a greater identification with the nation. The school also has been a great socializing factor. It is breaking down barrio localism and is making for friendships between individuals in different parts of the village. The school has offered new outlets for emotional expression.

PATTERNS OF CHANGE

In the preceding pages we have focused primarily upon the changes which have occurred in each of the major periods considered. But there have also been stable elements which have persisted almost intact, not only during the past twenty years, but since the beginning of the colonial period. This is all the more striking because of the proximity of the village to Mexico City and Cuernavaca. Perhaps the greatest stability has been in agriculture. The tools and techniques have remained essentially the same. Corn and beans are still the major crops. The agricultural economy is still primarily a subsistence economy. Tepoztlán has managed to hold its communal lands throughout this period, primarily because these lands are poor and undesirable to the near-by haciendas. This has been a primary factor in stabilizing Tepoztecan economy, although on a subsistence level with a low standard of living.

The persistence of Náhuatl is also noteworthy and was probably related to the class character of the society. It was primarily *caciques*, merchants, and artisans,

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who had need of Spanish in their dealings with the outside. The peasants traded among themselves and with the Náhuatl-speaking people of near-by villages. With the change in the class structure, the equalizing of opportunities, the greater contacts with the outside, and the increase in school attendance after the Revolution, the use of Spanish has increased.

It is on the psychocultural level that we find the greatest stability and continuity with the past. The reader who is familiar with the ethnographic literature of Middle America must be impressed with the many similarities in the general quality of inter-personal relations in Tepoztlán, and those reported from more isolated Indian communities in Guatemala. Among some of the similarities are the great value placed on work, the strong ties to the land, the view of farming as the ideal occupation, the persistence of an almost tribal localism, the stability and strength of the family, the continued belief in *los aires*, *mal ojo*, El Tepozteco, and herbal remedies.

In reviewing the history of cultural change in Tepoztlán since the Spanish Conquest, it is apparent that there is no single formula which will explain the whole range of phenomena. The period of the Spanish Conquest is an example of forced acculturation in which the direction of cultural change was in large measure determined by the conqueror rather than the conquered. The motives of Cortés, who controlled Tepoztlán and the surrounding villages, were to secure Tepoztecan labor for his mines and haciendas and obtain wealth in the form of taxes. He was not concerned with reorganizing Tepoztecan society and certainly was not interested in raising the standard of living. His policy was to interfere as little as possible with native beliefs and practices, except where they directly threatened his interests. As we have seen, he continued the tax system of Moctezuma; he did not alter the native boundaries; he left the Tepoztecans most of their communal lands, taking only the best portions.

It should be noted that many of the traits, such as religion, the calendar, the new system of weights and measures, were essential to the interests of the conquerors. In some cases, the Indians were specifically prohibited from taking on Spanish traits; witness the restrictions placed upon the owning of horses and firearms during the colonial period. Mounted and armed, Indians were obviously a threat to the conquerors.

Another important factor which determined the diffusion of Spanish traits during the colonial period was the inter-marriage of Spaniards with native women. The fact that there were no Spanish women, to teach their culinary and other domestic arts, perpetuated the native cuisine, utensils, and kitchen equipment. Similarly, practices of child rearing remained essentially native. However, the Indian women probably learned many Spanish folk beliefs from their husbands.

In other words, the Conquest affected the work of women much less directly than that of men. The men were forced to leave the village for long periods to work in the mines and haciendas, where they learned European agricultural methods and

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tional source of income by the prohibiting of charcoal production. Members of the lower segments of this group have gained least from the processes set in motion by the Mexican Revolution. They have been unable or unwilling to leave the village for jobs in the cities or to work as *braceros*. They have taken least advantage of the greater educational opportunities. They continue to farm for subsistence and cling to the old ways of life largely because these are cheaper.

As Tepoztlán moves further into the modern world, it is leaving behind its Indian language, many of its Indian customs, its local autonomy and the collective forms of pre-Hispanic times. Even the communal lands—the bulwark of the traditional order and formerly one of the most important bases for the corporate life of the community—seem destined to be divided up into *ejido* plots, and perhaps later into private holdings. With improved means of communication, greater faith in technology, greater dependence on a money economy and outside jobs, increasing occupational specialization, and a desire for a higher level of living, a change has come about also in the character of the people. As we have seen, Tepoztecans are now less suspicious, less withdrawn, and more concerned with personal development.

Tepoztlán today poses many questions which can be answered only with time. Will the growing individualism bring greater anxiety and frustration? Will it bring greater participation and trust in government? Will the traditional patterns of village life be able successfully to incorporate and reinterpret the present new elements—as has often been done with new elements in the past—or will the old and stable village culture soon be unrecognizable? Will Tepoztecans continue to sell their ancient lands and thereby convert Tepoztlán into a miniature Cuernavaca? Will the recent arrival of electricity be followed by the establishment of factories and the growth of a landless proletariat? Or will the village culture absorb the industrialism that seems to be on its way as some other villages have done?

Changes in village culture are exemplified in changing styles.